

To what extent was the united kingdom successful

[History](#)



Throughout the years of 1804 - 1815, Europe faced many problems; all of which were caused by an evil man, for some, but for others a legend, called Napoleon Bonaparte. When crowned emperor in 1804 he decided to make his dreams come true, make France the strongest country in Europe and in the world. For this, he created a gigantic army and began to conquer all Europe. With this happening, the other major countries of Europe saw the importance of getting together and deciding what to do with France and all the territory it had won with Napoleon campaigns.

Austrian, Britain, Russian, French and Prussian ministers and representatives all decided to get together in Vienna and decide the new territorial arrangements of Europe, after Napoleon had been defeated. In six months from November 1814 to May 1815, the famous treaty of Vienna was settled. In this essay, we will investigate to which extent Britain; one of the strongest countries at the congress was successful in negotiations and was able to achieve its plans. Although all representatives in Vienna had the same broad principles, they all differed in the specific aims and ambitions, which formed their national interest.

Britain for example, represented by Castlereagh, believed it was necessary to especially establish a greater balance of power at Europe, this ideal meant that no single Power would be able to exercise influence or control over the others inside the continent. This principal was obviously most influenced by the Napoleonic Period where France was clearly the absolute power in Europe. Britain believed that this ideal could be obtained by uniting Austria and Prussia, which would culminate in a better division of power in Central

Europe and this could be achieved by giving some of the territory Napoleon had won in his years of emperor to both.

A stronger Balance of Power in Europe would also create endurance in the commerce of Europe and this would well favour Britain, as it is an island that depends on commerce for its economy to survive. Furthermore, because Britain is an island did not have interest in gaining any territories. The centralization of power in Europe at the congress also led to another point analyzed by the nations at Vienna, Containment. Containment was seen, by all nations, as another way of preventing another war. It intended to stop a country becoming a single and absolute power in the continent, the way France had been under the command of Napoleon Bonaparte.

By the British point of view, containment had to specially focus on France, so there would be no future threats by this nation. The other country to be observed was Russia. The British saw Russia as an emerging and very ambitious superpower and Tsar Alexander as a man of great ambitious plans. This issue in Vienna led to another discussion, which was about lasting peace that focused on making Europe return to how it was. People wanted Europe to be again a place of no different viewpoints and that all nations could be friendly to each other.

The British thought that the balance of power in central Europe was crucial for this to happen, so Castlereagh fought thoroughly for territory to be given to Prussia and Austria. Another topic very discussed in the Vienna conference was compensation, which all nations even indirectly requested for. These were most obtained together with the territorial reshaping of Europe.

Even Britain, which went to the conference with no ambitions on territorial rearrangements that would favour the country, obtained some compensation through the acquisition of colonial bases.

Finally yet importantly, Legitimacy was the other subject of discussion at Vienna. This topic would be used by all nations to discuss the new rulers of the territories that France had taken power with Napoleon. Britain wasn't very concerned with this aspect of the conference for this it was neutral but always took decisions imagining future consequences, for example trying to avoid men like Napoleon that could try and create a single power in Europe again.

In June 9, 1815, the Congress's final decree was signed. Nine days before Napoleon was finally defeated at Waterloo. The congress's principal results were the enlargement of Russia and Prussia, which was given extensive territory in the Rhineland, the consolidation of Germany, the German confederation being put under the control of both Austria and Prussia and land being given to Austria (Lombardy - Venetia in Northern Italy and Tuscany).

Also very importantly, the Pope was restored to the Papal States. Apart from these major verdicts many other aspects of the treaty are not of a big importance, mainly these consist of other territorial arrangements and also the unification of Holland with the former Austrian Netherlands. Analyzing all the ideas Britain had and tried to achieve at the Vienna Conference and the outcome of the treaty, we can conclude that Britain was quite successful in the decisions of the Congress.

This can be seen as Prussia and Austria were clearly favoured with the territory rearrangements, this was one of the things Britain wanted for a centralization of power in Europe and to create a better containment against France and a future threat, which could possibly Russia. This also led to what Britain imagined of how to protect lasting peace in Europe, which was what its population wanted and to improve commerce in the whole of Europe and this could very well favour the British economy.

What didn't turn out well for the British was the fact that Tsar Alexander got what he wanted, he managed to increase the size of Russia with new territory he won with the treaty. This wasn't good at all for the British because they saw Alexander's Russia as a future threat and a country who had the ambition to be stronger and stronger at all time meaning this could culminate in the creation of another single power in Europe. This could create terrible effects for the continent and also for the lasting peace that the British population desired.